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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 000760

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [ID](#)
SUBJECT: COUNTERTERRORISM -- INDONESIA CONVICTS THREE MORE
JI-LINKED TERRORISTS

REF: A. JAKARTA 643
[1](#)B. 08 JAKARTA 1298 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph L. Novak, reasons 1.4(b+d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: A Jakarta court has convicted three terrorists, including an Afghan-trained Singaporean national with links to Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) leader Mas Selamat Kastari. The three were members of the so-called "Palembang Group" and were arrested during a July 2008 raid on a suspected JI safehouse in South Sumatra. The seven other members of the group were already convicted in earlier trials. The U.S.-supported Terrorism and Transnational Crime Task Force at the Attorney General's Office (AGO) prosecuted all ten members of the Palembang Group. END SUMMARY.

JUST SHORT OF MAXIMUM SENTENCE

[1](#)2. (C) On April 28, the South Jakarta District Court handed down an 18-year sentence to Mohammad Hasan bin Saynudin aka Fajar Taslim for deliberately causing "widespread terror." Although another member of the group was considered the "emir" or leader, Mohammad Hasan played an important role directing the group's activities.

[1](#)3. (C) The prosecution was pleased with the verdict. Narendra Jatna, the lead prosecutor on the case, told poloff that the court had cut two years from the maximum 20 that prosecutors had requested in order to show some mercy on the perpetrator, but this was still considerably less than the routine reduction. Mohammad Hasan had stated he was ready to accept the decision and shouted "God is Great" after hearing the sentence. The judges noted, however, that he had showed no remorse for his terrorist activities. In an interview with the Jakarta Globe, Jatna claimed he should be rewarded for "fighting on behalf of Islam."

AFGHAN-TRAINED AND EXPERIENCED

[1](#)4. (SBU) Mohammad Hasan was the most notable of the Palembang Group. A Singaporean national of Malay origin, he had worked as an English teacher. He received training in Afghanistan where in 2000 he reputedly met with Osama bin Laden. He was allegedly a courier between bin Laden and Riduan Isamuddin aka "Hambali," who is currently in U.S. detention. Mohammad Hasan had a close relationship with Singaporean JI leader Mas Selamat Kastari and the late bomb-maker Dr. Azahari from whom he allegedly learned bomb making techniques. Hasan claimed that he and others plotted to hijack a plane and crash it into Singapore's Changi Airport in 2001.

15. (SBU) Under Mohammad Hasan's tutelage, the Palembang Group attempted to kill a priest in Bandung, West Java, in September 2006; killed a Christian teacher in Palembang in June 2007; attempted to bomb a West Sumatran cafe frequented by tourists in South Sumatra; and plotted to kill two priests in Jakarta. The ten members of the so-called "Palembang Group" were arrested during a July 2008 raid on the home of Abdurrahman Taib, the Palembang Group's defacto leader (reftel B). The raid also netted a cache of home-made bombs.

16. (C) Despite Mohammad Hasan's claims and contrary to press reports, the Palembang Group was not a JI terrorist cell per se. The nine other members of the Palembang Group convened at the home of Abdurrahman Taib as members of the local Forum Against Apostasy or FAKTA group. Mohammad Hasan had befriended the men after fleeing from Singapore. Mohammad Hasan was the only member of the group with a clear connection to the JI terrorist network.

TWO ADDITIONAL CONVICTIONS

17. (SBU) Per the April 28 ruling, two more members of the Palembang group were convicted on terrorism charges. Ali Mashudi aka Zuber received a ten-year sentence and Wahyudi aka Yudi received a 12-year sentence for their roles in the Palembang Group's terrorist activities. The ten- and 12-year sentences were consistent with the sentences of the other Palembang Group members, almost all of whom received 12 years in jail. Although the prosecutors had requested stiffer sentences, the judges recognized that the two men had shown remorse.

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PALEMBANG GROUP -- ALL ACCOUNTED FOR

18. (SBU) All ten members of the Palembang Group were successfully prosecuted by members of the U.S.-supported Attorney General's Terrorism and Transnational Crime Task Force. Of the men who were convicted on April 7 and April 21, none have decided to appeal the verdicts. Details on the ten and the lengths of their sentences follow:

- Mohammad Hasan, 18 years
- Ali Mashudi, 10 years
- Wahyudi, 12 years
- Abdurrohman Taib, 12 years
- Ki Agus Mohammad Toni, 12 years
- Anis Sugandi, 5 years
- Sukarso Abdillah, 4 years
- Agustiawarman, 12 years
- Sugiharto, 12 years
- Her Purwanto, 12 years

HUME